

1. What do you want the Selectmen, Finance Committee and public know about what you've done in Fiscal Year 2015 and Fiscal Year 2016 (to date)?

A. The board of health successfully put two abandoned properties into the Attorney General's Abandoned Housing Initiative. With the exception of staff time two receiverships were completed at zero cost to the town.

- 110 L Street is a 6 unit apartment building that had been vacant and deteriorating for 20 years. This building is now fully rehabilitated, code compliant and fully occupied.
- 132 L Street, a few houses up from 110 L, was a further blight to L Street for the last 20 years or so. This multifamily building is now being fully rehabilitated and will be occupied by spring.
- 104 Third Street had been abandoned by Matt Robinson and went into foreclosure. The current owner, Peter Quintana has been motivated by the threat of receivership to rehab this two family building; currently the first floor is occupied. *(The board of health is cognizant of the fact that some individuals purchase properties for dirt cheap prices and do not rehab them but "sit on them" in the hopes the market will turn and they can turn a quick profit. We want buildings that are code compliant and occupied.)*
- 18 Central Street: the property owner is deceased and no one in his family is taking an interest in the building. Therefore it has been in foreclosure. The board of health caused the property to be boarded and secured to the National Arson Prevention Standards. This prevents break-ins, squatting and interior fires that threaten neighboring, inhabited properties. This two-family home is on the docket for receivership in 2016.
- The Attorney General's Abandoned Housing Initiative is limited to properties that are unoccupied. Because the Board of Health is slowly changing neighborhoods into vibrant, safer, areas of town due to buildings being occupied with families. The town has committed some funding for legal services to address deteriorating properties that are occupied. This is extremely important to the overall health of the town. We have a relatively small number of absentee landlords who do not care for their buildings or their tenants. These out of town/state property owners have at times allowed squatters to take over their buildings. This has created havens for vagrants and addicted individuals, drug dealers and created an unsafe environment for people living in the community.
- The Board of Health Director is extremely grateful to have funding for a 25/hour/week health inspector. The Board of Health conducts housing inspections, all restaurant inspections, all temporary food booths (the Spring Parade, Mutton and Mead, the Pumpkinfest and others totaling over 100 extra inspections per year), we oversee the design and construction of all septic systems and private wells, we respond to greater than 100 complaints per year among other duties. Having a 25 hour per week health inspector makes it possible to almost keep up with the required duties of the board of health. The department's monthly reports are available in the board of health office. These work reports illustrate the volume and scope of the work done by our department they are available for review at any time.

2. Please explain any significant changes in your budget for Fiscal Year 2017, including any staff changes (if that impacts your budget).

- There are no changes in the board of health budget for 2017. We are pleased with what we have for human resources and we appreciate the funding.

3. Is there anything specific or new that you plan to accomplish in Fiscal Year 2017 with the level-services budget you've requested?

I plan on continuing to get our housing stock up to code and inhabited. If things go well our food inspection program will improve and we will conduct the required 2 inspections per year of all our food establishments.

4. Is there anything you'd like to ADD to your level-services budget for Fiscal Year 2017? If so, describe what it is, what it would cost, and the benefit to the town.

- I could increase my department's efficiency and effectiveness by purchasing software called WinWam. This program is being used by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Division of Community Sanitation, the City of Newton, the towns of Ashland, Hopkinton, and Medway to name a few. The software runs on a windows platform and allows the health inspector to enter all inspection findings into a handheld tablet. The software cites chapter and verse of the applicable state law preventing citation errors and creating extremely uniform orders to correct and reports. Employing this software would cut down the average food establishment inspection time by an hour to an hour and a half, depending on the size of the facility. This is because currently all citations are handwritten and code citations must be looked up and applied to the order to correct. The same software is capable of documenting housing inspections, swimming pool inspection, recreational camps for children other inspections. The cost to own the software and all the inspection forms and training and support is \$5,600.00. We would need to purchase two handheld tablets at a cost of under \$1,000.00. Owning a perpetual license for the software is beneficial because if at some point the town could not pay the annual \$600.00 software maintenance fee, we would still own the program and could keep on using it. I estimate that owning the WinWam system would increase our productivity by 25% or more. This would mean shorter wait times for inspections, safer food facilities, better housing and great consistency in all reports which always helps with cases that go to court.

5. What are your plans for improvements and projects for the next five years?

- Streamline inspections by, *at some point*, owning and using the WinWam software described above.
- Update outdated board of health regulations such as private well water regulations.
- Continue becoming educated and certified in topics germane to public health. Currently using grant funding I am working on a national certification called "Certified Professional-Food Service" (CP-FS). This is the premier certification for food safety professionals.
- Continue the goal of providing safe, code compliant housing to every resident of Montague.
- Continue to create and use databases in Access and Excel to streamline permitting.